

Nashua Business Industrial Development Authority

City Hall Room 208
Friday, September 16, 2016
8:15 a.m.

Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order

Authority members present: Chairman Jack Tulley, Carl Andrade, Lydia Foley, Jason Haviland, Mark Prolman, John Stabile, Brad Vear, Kim Reagan, Alderman Brian McCarthy

City staff present: Economic Development Director Tim Cummings, City Treasurer David Fredette, Downtown Specialist James Vayo

Also present: Members of the public.

Meeting called to order at 8:19 AM by Chairman J. Tulley

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes

MOTION TO APPROVE THE JULY 15TH, 2016 MINUTES MADE BY J. HAVILAND AND SECONDED BY C. ANDRADE AND APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. Bridge Street Project Update

T. Cummings notifies the authority that there is a tentative closing date of October 28th for phase one of the Bridge Street development. T. Cummings provides a description of recent communication between Renaissance and the City of Nashua, notes there is an agreement to ensure the skate park remains open after closing until which time that its relocation is complete.

T. Cummings notes the closing date is to ensure there is some time between closing and November 1st which is the date when SMC's options on the development expire.

Chairman Tulley asks if the agreement to keep the skate park open would inhibit the outcome of the approvals of the skate park relocation.

T. Cummings notes that the approvals for the skate park are all complete and the relocation only requires a contract with a design-build contractor.

J. Stabile asks if a Phase II Environmental Assessment has been completed as he has some concerns that the area was once a land fill.

T. Cummings notes a Phase II study has been completed and the Stello's development provides additional supporting details on the limits of environmental issues in the area.

B. McCarthy notes that most of the environmental issues are to the east of the selected site.

B. Vear asks about the size of the proposed skate park.

T. Cummings notes it will be approximately the same size as the former skate park. He also informs the authority that there are some additional minor engineering tasks that are yet to be completed by Renaissance but that they have committed to completing them before closing.

M. Prolman asks if there is a 30 day appeals period.

T. Cumming confirms and notes that Renaissance and SMC are going to indemnify the City of Nashua of any appeals.

J. Tulley requests the memo from Corporation Council on Right to Know Law as it pertains to use of E-mail be forwarded to the members of the authority for review by the end of the day.

J. Tulley commends Heath Gaffney for his efforts in advocating for the Bridge Street project.

J. Stabile asks what the benefits are for the now pending execution of Bridge Street.

J. Tulley notes the monetary benefits of the new tax base as well as the savings to the City of Nashua on sewer improvements.

B. McCarthy notes the purchasing power of all the new residents who will move there.

B. Vear notes that it addresses the land vacancy and deferred maintenance of the area.

K. Reagan adds that the question from J. Stabile is a good one as there is a need to inform the public to the benefits to this project.

B. McCarthy notes that the project is a testament to the value of the BIDA to the public.

M. Prolman notes that this project is good urban renewal and much better than the alternative.

4. 25 Crown Street Update

T. Cummings describes the timeline of the project which is located behind Make-it-labs. He notes construction should begin in the Spring and should take approximately 6 months.

T. Cummings adds that there are hard timelines from DOT for CMAQ funds to be spent and that the project will result in improvements to the area. T. Cummings notes that the engineering is currently underway.

5. School Street Lot

J. Vayo describes the framework for the draft RFP and hands out a one-page flyer to the members.

J. Tulley asks if there will be additional developer tours as the database of attendees for that tour would be a good place to share the flyers.

B. McCarthy adds that additional developer tours would be of benefit to the City of Nashua.

J. Tulley notes that the elections may have impacts on the real estate market.

Kim Reagan notes that the developer tour was of value and that it was received well by her colleagues.

J. Tulley notes that the discussion in front of the PEDC regarding the School Street RFP resulted in the desire to look at a larger development area, possible use as a college as well.

B. McCarthy adds that the RFP was revised to include additional uses including a hotel and add additional parcels but that the City of Nashua will not negotiate lot consolidation for developers.

T. Cummings outlines the challenges to a larger development concept, shares his concern about the inability to execute a larger development without land control but appreciates the fact that a larger unit count may not be possible without the aggregation of additional lots. Notes the challenges of negotiation with private property owners.

B. McCarthy asks if a smaller concept will meet the requirements in the resolution.

T. Cummings notes that the RFP does respond to both the individual development site as well as the potential for a larger development area.

B. McCarthy expresses disappointment that the area is not being considered for a larger conceptual development plan, thinks neighboring property owners may be willing to participate if their needs for parking for existing uses can be integrated into future planned development.

J. Vayo notes he has been in discussions with Rob Parsons regarding the courthouse property and how the master planning of the area likely would not involve changes to High Street or consolidation with the School Street Lot.

J. Vayo shares his thoughts about how the School Street Lot is really isolated from the Courthouse but it does have the benefit of being located next to the High Street Garage which would allow the site to reach a high density. Notes that the funding for reconfiguration of the Courthouse Oval is in the State's Ten Year Plan but it may take years for the state to fund it.

B. McCarthy notes if the master planning takes place, then that will inform the potential for the area to reach additional density and worries about a single building in a sea of parking lots.

B. Vear notes that the flyer should include information about the opportunity for an area master plan and that will lead to additional interest from potential developers.

J. Vayo affirms B. Vear's suggestion and will add the area information to the RFP. Explains how the RFP is written to allow for developers to submit proposals for just the site or a more comprehensive area wide development proposal.

J. Stabile asks who will be the responsible party for negotiation with a developer that wins the RFP. J. Vayo notes that it will be the City of Nashua but details are still forthcoming.

M. Prolman asks about the Polish American building. B. McCarthy mentions that they have been in discussions with Chris Folkas regarding the siting of an arts center.

B. McCarthy notes the additional building to the East of the Polish American Club which can be included in the development as well.

J. Tulley ask for clarification of the term "street grid".

J. Vayo explains the value of walkability in downtown real estate and the impact of the block size on the walkability of a downtown. Notes that breaking up the courthouse area into two or three blocks which will allow for a more walkable environment will result in a more desirable area.

J. Vayo talks about the ability for there to be incremental development of sites if the area is broken into smaller blocks, he also shares his discussions with Rob Parsons about the challenges with creating a large consolidated development site and the barriers that it could create in the community.

J. Tulley asks about changing the one way streets to two way streets.

B. McCarthy explains that there is a contract out to VHB to look at reversing one way travel on Pearl Street and other streets. He notes that there is a general acknowledgement that the Courthouse Oval needs to be squared off into blocks.

J. Stabile asks if an even larger master plan area all the way down to the mill yard can be considered given that the Broad Street Parkway is now complete.

B. McCarthy thinks it's a worthy consideration but such an effort would likely face lack of funding. He informs the authority that there have been past conversations about opening up Myrtle Street in the mill yard to the courthouse area. Long term, there is a need to look at the intersections on Main Street as well.

J. Tulley asks how much it would cost to do a large area master plan study, T. Cummings suggest it would be less than \$200,000.

T. Cummings believes the update to the VHB downtown traffic circulation study will have specific recommendations and guidance for updating the traffic patterns.

T. Cummings wanted the input of the authority on the RFP prior to posting it and I will work with J. Vayo to make modifications to the RFP as a result of this meeting but cautions against the City becoming involved in discussions about lot consolidation. We are happy to delay the RFP to ensure all parties involved are happy with the outcome.

J. Tulley states that this authority is patient and willing to take the time in order to get it right.

M. Prolman suggests B. McCarthy and he go out and speak with the two social clubs.

T. Cummings says he is happy to go out with B. McCarthy to have the discussions with private property owners. He shares that there has been little interest to date in such a proposal.

J. Tulley asks who owns the cab stand, J. Vayo responds that it is owned by the city, T. Cummings clarifies that the cab stand its self is owned by SK Taxi but that the city owns all the land surrounding it.

B. Vear asks that the flyer include information about the spaces in the High Street Garage.

B. McCarthy notes he see the value in releasing an RFP for the School Street Lot as long as it is in the context of a master plan development area. In the end, parcels will be developed separately.

J. Vayo talks about the announcement from the EPA for technical assistance grants which Nashua could submit a letter of interest for assistance with planning for infill development around the Courthouse Oval. If selected, the assistance would come in the beginning of 2017.

6. Other Business

J. Stabile wishes to see the BIDA establish a business plan for themselves in light of the newly understood powers of the Authority. J. Stabile suggest that the BIDA work through

J. Haviland asks what that plan might look like.

M. Prolman reminds the authority that at one time, they oversaw a revolving loan fund.

T. Cummings affirms J. Stabile's interest in establishing a business plan and would like to work with the BIDA to assist them in executing the task.

B. McCarthy also is in support of establishment of a business plan and would suggest some special meetings be set to discuss the effort.

7. Next Meeting Date:

Next meeting scheduled for October 21st, 2016 in Room 208 at 8:15 AM. This meeting is subject to change due to a potential schedule conflict for a member of the committee.

MOTION TO ADJOURN MADE BY B. MCCARTHY AND SECONDED BY M. PROLMAN MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:08 AM.

